

Texas Ghost Tales and Legends Annotated Bibliography

Avila, Alfred. *Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest*. Houston: Piñata Books, 1994. Many of Avila's stories are legends associated with Borderland towns and rivers, including "La Llorona," "The Dead Man's Shoes," "The Yaqui Indian and the Dogs," "The Caves of Death" (about Pancho Villa's treasure), "The Water Curse," "La Llorona of the Moon," "The Owl," and others. Clearly a labor of love, the stories are dedicated to Avila's parents, translated and compiled by his daughter, Kat, and illustrated with his own fiercely expressive drawings.

Brewer, J. Mason. *Dog Ghosts and Other Texas Negro Folk Tales*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958, 1976. Brewer was every bit the folklorist and collector that Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were, so dedicated to the accuracy of his recording that he wrote stories out just as they were spoken, in the rural Texas black dialect of the 1930s and 1940s. His choice makes the stories tedious reading, and the fact that many strongly reflect the social attitudes toward black-white relationships of their day make them awkward to use casually in the classroom, but Texas folklore is not complete without them. The endearing title stories testify to the strength of the folk belief that deceased persons may reappear as animal ghosts to protect or warn their loved ones.

Dobie, J. Frank. *I'll Tell You a Tale—An Anthology*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984. Dobie's own favorite tales from all his Texas collections, edited by him for a satisfying read. Includes a range of classics such as these haunting legends: "The Maverick Branded Murder," "The Headless Horseman of the Mustangs," "The Marqués de Aguayo's Vengeance," "The Dream that Saved Wilbarger," "The Mezcla Man," "General Mexhuira's Ghost," and "Godmother Death and the Herb of Life."

Foster, Catherine Munson. *Ghosts along the Brazos*. Waco: Texian Press, 1977. Ms. Foster collected local ghost legends dating back to the colonial period, then perfected her narratives by telling them to three generations of schoolchildren. Includes "Bailey's Light" (about the ghost lights on Bailey's Prairie), "The Story of Lily Brown," "Ghost Dogs of Orozimbo," and eleven others. Hard to find, this collection is now available through the Brazoria County Museum's online gift shop. (<http://bulletin-ol.com/museum/shop.html>)

Netardus, Leon. *Ghosts of Gonzales*. Gonzales, Tex.: Reese's Print Shop, n.d. This pamphlet-sized publication is an excellent example of a local community collection that could be done by a student with good connections. Almost any older community has, as Netardus says, "its share of ghosts and then some." The collection offers short stories of ghosts who hang out in residences and public buildings and those called "Rural Rogues." The stories include a few that are not necessarily about ghosts, such as the cursed courthouse clock and the monster of Ottine. Available online through the Gonzales Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. http://www.gonzalestexas.com/souv/historical_books.htm

Sauvageau, Juan. *Stories that Must Not Die*, vols. 1-4. Kingsville, Tex.: Juan Sauvageau, 1975-1978. Reprinted many times, these volumes contain tales collected in South Texas, each given in English and Spanish, side by side, with vocabulary lists of English/Spanish words and cognates

and questions in both languages. Forty tales in all offer a wealth of uses for bilingual and language classes. Tales of supernatural events include “Dancing with a Ghost,” “The Sobbing Woman” (La Llorona), “The Devil’s Lagoon,” “The Revenge of the Oppressed,” “The Lady in Black,” “The Headless Rider,” “All or Nothing,” “Not Only One but Two Devils,” “The Voice,” “Thunder Ramirez,” “The Perfume that Kills,” and many others.

Syers, Ed. *Ghost Stories of Texas*. Waco: Texian Press, 1981. This is the classic collection of Texas ghosts, with representatives from all over the state. Coming from Syers’s extensive travel and his statewide interviews concerning many facets of Texas history, the ghosts and monsters in this book will delight anyone—and is a guide, without intending to be, concerning how stories are collected. Included are many of the more serious tales: deadly spirits that still plague travelers on lonely roads, wandering lights that lead people to their doom, and home-grown Texas monsters

Williams, Docia Schultz. *Best Tales of Texas Ghosts*. Plano, Tex.: Republic of Texas Press, 1998. This and other collections by Williams contain reports of the author’s site visits, interviews, and investigations of alleged ghosts in various regions of our state. Organized by region or category of site (theaters, hotels, etc.), her entries model what students might produce from their own investigations of local ghosts. Other Williams ghostly titles include *Ghosts along the Texas Coast*, *The History and Mystery of the Menger Hotel*, *Phantoms of the Plains: Tales of West Texas Ghosts*, *Spirits of San Antonio and South Texas* (with Reneta Byrne), and *When Darkness Falls: Tales of San Antonio Ghosts*.

Wolff, Henry, Jr. *Ghosts of Goliad and Other Stories of Presidio La Bahia*. Victoria, Tex.: Victoria Advocate Publishing Co, 1999. This short book is a collection of newspaper columns that Wolff, a Texas journalist, published over a twenty-year period about Presidio La Bahía in *The Victoria Advocate*. Here are unexplained sounds, long-dead soldiers, mystery women, and buried treasure. Although Wolff says that the publication is not a history of the former Spanish presidio, the book contains stories of the restoration and preservation of the site as well as the spirits who just might still walk there.